Savannah River Site
Citizens Advisory Board

Key criteria for Board membership includes a time commitment and the desire and ability to work towards better and informed recommendations.

To apply for membership to the Citizens Advisory Board, please call 1-800-249-8155.

Board Beat is published semiannually by the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Content is provided by Board members and support staff. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

Dawn Haygood
SRS Citizens Advisory Board
Building 742-A, Room 190
Aiken, SC 29808
Phone: 1-800-249-8155
Fax: 803-725-8057
Email: dawn.haygood@srs.gov

Upcoming 2003 Citizens Advisory Board Meetings

May 19 - 20	Hyatt Regency Hotel, Savannah, GA
July 21 – 22	Adams Mark, Columbia, SC
September 22 – 23	Houndslake Country Club, Aiken, SC
November 17 – 18	Embassy Suites, N. Charleston, SC

Note: Individual committee meetings will be held as required.

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SPRING 2003

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

Board Beat

SRS Plans to Accelerate Accelerated Cleanup

A year almost to the day after the Department of Energy presented its Top-to-Bottom Review and requested public input on its Performance Management Plan, SRS representatives returned for continued discussions with stakeholders on how to accelerate the accelerated cleanup plan. On February 24, the Strategic Initiatives Committee of the SRS Citizens Advisory Board hosted a meeting of approximately 30 stakeholders to learn about the SRS FY 2004 Budget, the Performance Management Plan (PMP) and plans to further accelerate cleanup. Mary Flora of Westinghouse Savannah River Company discussed the objectives of the major programs in the PMP, now considered the baseline for SRS cleanup. "We're not resting on our laurels, but looking to better performance against current PMP accelerated cleanup and risk reduction objectives" said Ms. Flora. "In other words, we want to accelerate our accelerated cleanup plan."

The SRS Cleanup Priorities include performing work safely while being protective of workers, the public and the environment and to eliminate or reduce risk faster and shorten the cleanup schedule. The reduction of cleanup costs and consolidation of nuclear materials to accelerate closure of other sites are also priorities.

Ms. Flora discussed various ideas for achieving these priorities. By accelerating the completion of high level waste processing using new techniques to reduce canister production and expediting salt processing by segregating salt waste, SRS can complete this work 20 years earlier, produce 15 percent fewer canisters and save up to $7 billion. Deactivating F Canyon and FB-Line by 2007 and consolidating spent nuclear fuel into a single storage basin by 2004 would save $485 million in nuclear materials costs and defer $1billion in spent nuclear fuel disposition. SRS could complete transuranic waste shipments 23 years earlier and save nearly $1.7 billion if existing SRS facilities are used to process and treat high activity transuranic waste and complete shipments by 2013. Streamlining regulatory processes and using innovative technologies while accelerating the completion of the environmental remediation by 2026 would save $150 million for existing projects and an expected 13 percent for future remediation projects. If SRS accelerates the decommissioning of inactive facilities in T, D and M Areas, this would result in the removal of approximately 72 inactive facilities and a footprint reduction of 567,000 square feet by 14 years.

Although Ms. Flora presented examples from the various site programs, the emphasis of the meeting was placed on receiving public input that was recorded for consideration by the Site. There was little-to-no debating of issues as all ideas and comments were noted. Public sentiment was varied, however several common issues did emerge.

Stakeholders want to see the SRS high level waste tanks cleaned out and closed as expeditiously as possible.

Stakeholders' want to see the SRS high level waste tanks cleaned out and closed as expeditiously as possible. They were concerned about available technologies, funding and lawsuits that might impeded progress. The closure and eventual deactivation and decommissioning of F Canyon was another major topic of interest. Stakeholders were interested in timelines, long term plans for the facility, an area approach to closure versus a facility approach and the need to address long term disposition of all nuclear materials.

Stakeholders' comments emphasized the importance of the Transuranic Waste Program at SRS during discussion of solid waste issues. Concerns regarding the regulatory definition of transuranic waste, the need to ship high activity transuranic waste and the lack of necessary shipping containers dominated this

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Special points of interest

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New Designated Federal Official
SRS CAB Says Good-by to Tom Heenan

Boards Tackle Transuranic Waste Issues

Every year we provide an update on SRS Citizens Advisory Board participation in national workshops attended by the nine DOE Site Specific Advisory Boards. The latest was held January 31-February 2 in Carlsbad, NM. The topic of discussion was transuranic waste and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). Hosted by the Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board, the three-day event included a tour of WIPP and two days of discussions regarding regulatory and outreach issues; transportation; waste characterization; treatment and packaging; and management issues regarding the DOE Transuranic Waste Program. SRS participants included Board members Wade Waters, Jean Sulc, Dorene Richardson, Gerald Devitt, and Bill Willoughby. Other attendees included Keith Collinsworth and Chuck Gorman of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control; Bert Crapse of DOE; and Sonny Goldston and Dawn Haygood from Westinghouse Savannah River Company.

SRS Citizens Advisory Board representatives tour the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, NM.

WIPP is an underground repository on the northern edge of the Chihauhuan Desert near Carlsbad, New Mexico. The plant consists of above-ground and underground facilities, both of which were toured by participants. A 250 million year-old salt formation lies more than one half mile below the surface where nearly 40,000 waste containers of TRU waste have been disposed. The mine consists of rooms and panels the size of 18 football fields. At the depth of 2,150 feet, the salt will slowly encapsulate the buried waste in the stable rock providing shielding from radioactivity similar to concrete. The salt will remain stable for a quarter million years, which is about how long the WIPP-bound waste will take to lose most of its harmful radioactivity and no longer be a threat to human health and the environment.

An easy definition of transuranic waste is discarded clothing, equipment, tools and rags lightly contaminated by radioactive elements "beyond uranium", like plutonium and neptunium. Although total radioactivity is no higher than low level waste, the radioactivity decays slowly over thousands of years. The official definition is solid radioactive waste that contains alpha-emitting radionuclides with half-lives greater than 20 years, in concentrations greater than 100nCi/g, except high level waste. Most of the transuranic waste at SRS was generated from plutonium processing in HB and FB Lines. SRS has the equivalent of 30,000 55-gallon drums of transuranic waste and has made more than sixty shipments to WIPP. A fleet of 33 semi trucks transfers transuranic waste from generator sites to WIPP in large cylinders called a TRUPACT-II, which is capable of holding two standard waste boxes or fourteen 55-gallon drums.

CAB members discussed regulatory and outreach issues; transportation; waste characterization; treatment and packaging; and management issues regarding the DOE Transuranic Waste Program

Within the DOE complex, five sites have large quantities of TRU waste earmarked for WIPP and 22 small quantity generator sites have inventories to be shipped to WIPP as well.

The two-day workshop consisted of four breakout sessions where members from each of the boards brought forth issues of concern and developed draft recommendations to address these issues. These recommendations were taken back to the full group for discussion and comment. The groups reconvened on day two to modify the recommendations based on comments by the full group. Attendees reached agreement on a final set of recommendations, however each local board was asked to review them by late March for final endorsement before formally transmitting to DOE for response.

Six of the nine boards plan to endorse the recommendations. Three boards were unable to reach concensus.

Chuck Gorman, SCDHEC, joined the other participants who suited up with hard hats, light sources and portable emergency air supply before heading underground.

Top Ten Issues Ranked

SRS CAB Approves Work Plan For 2003

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board recently issued its latest Annual Work Plan. The Work Plan covers approximately one calendar year and identifies the "Top Ten" priority issues for the CAB. It also identifies additional issues for each committee.

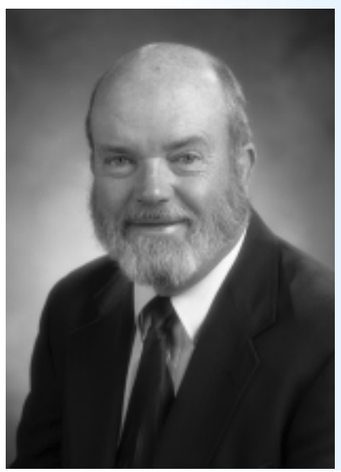
Although there are a wide variety of issues of interest to the CAB, there are limits to available time and resources. The purpose of this Work Plan is to establish priority issues for each of the Committees, and therefore for the CAB. It allows all Board members to be involved in setting the direction of the CAB, even for the Committees of which they are not members. The Committee chairs strive to structure their activities to focus on the Top Ten priority issues. Since new issues may come up during the year, deviating from the Work Plan is at the discretion of the Committee Chairs - however, they typically inform the CAB when this is required.

The Top Ten list is the result of a survey taken of the CAB members at the January 2003 CAB meeting in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. The CAB members were given a list of 22 issues developed by the issues-based committees the day before, and asked to rank them in order of priority, with 1 being the highest priority and 22 being the lowest priority. The results of the surveys were compared, resulting in the identification of the following Top Ten issues for 2003:

1. Deactivation and Decommissioning (D&D) – Environmental Restoration Committee
2. End State Vision for Environmental Management Including D&D and Future Land Use - Long-Term Stewardship Committee
3. TRU Waste Program - Waste Management Committee
4. Treatment of Salt Waste - Waste Management Committee
5. Canyon Utilization – Nuclear Materials Committee
6. Disposition of Plutonium Not Suitable for MOX - Nuclear Materials Committee
7. EM Performance Management Plan – Strategic Initiatives Committee
8. Burial Ground Complex – Environmental Restoration Committee
9. Integration of Accelerated Canyon Closure with HLW Activities - Waste Management Committee
10. Budget Development/Priorities/Performance Based Incentives - Strategic Initiatives Committee

The Work Plan is reviewed and updated annually and can be viewed on the CAB website at www.srs.gov/general/outreach/srs-cab/geninfo/info.html

Visit our web site at www.srs.gov and click on Outreach Programs



Tom Heenan, Ex-Officio since SRS CAB Inception Retires

Heenan Retires

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board bids farewell to Tom Heenan, Department of Energy Ex-Officio Member since the Board's inception in 1994. Mr. Heenan retired from his position as Assistant Manager for Environment, Science and Technology in January. Mr. Heenan's contributions to the SRS Citizens Advisory Board are reflected by the success of this board. We'd like to express our sincere appreciation for his commitment and dedication. We wish him well in his retirement!

SRS Plans to Accelerate ...

discussion. Comments regarding the Soil and Groundwater Program varied. Several stakeholders discussed the need to define "how clean is clean?" Another stated that interim actions are a band-aid approach to cleanup and should be avoided. Others were concerned about the regulatory aspects of the program and suggested using a more risk-based approach with the regulators. Regarding Facility Decommissioning, stakeholders had more questions than comments. They wanted to know who had the last word on what is decomissioned and how that determination is made as well as how the program relates risk, schedule and costs. What are the drivers? Stakeholders commented that the focus should be on risk, not reducing the footprint of the site and one stakeholder warned that no one should assume that the site boundary will remain the same.

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board will continue to follow and provide input in cleanup discussions as well as provide a vehicle for interested stakeholders to relay ideas and suggestions. For a more detailed account of the above meeting, you may call 1-800-249-8155 for a copy of the minutes or view them at the SRS CAB website at www.srs.gov and click on Outreach.

Alice Doswell, Acting Assistant Manager for Environment, Science and Technology is the Designated Federal Official of the SRS CAB

The SRS CAB said goodbye to several fellow members in 2003. (pictured above) CAB Members Ken Goad, Jimmy Mackey, Nancy Ann Ciehanski, David Adcock and Becki Dawson. Not pictured: Vera Jordan, JG Long and Marty Stringer.

Is your organization looking for interesting speakers?

Members of the SRS CAB are available to provide

- A brief history of SRS
- A description of the various environmental management programs
- Information about how the public can get more involved in important cleanup decisions.

Call 1-800-249-8155 for more information

Recent Recommendations Highlighted

Glass Waste Storage Building #2

Recommendation 158 asks DOE to revise the project implementation to meet the current projected need date for Glass Waste Storage Building #2 of October 2006 and present the revised schedule to the CAB on or before March 25, 2003. It also asked DOE to investigate streamlining the current acquisition strategy, specifically requiring the contractor to be responsible for the detailed project and construction management with DOE and the Corps of Engineers having an overview function.

Low Curie Salt to Saltstone

The Board recommended that SRS focus on cleanup and risk reduction while maintaining, and if possible accelerating, the current high level waste tank closure schedule. It also requested that DOE, EPA and SCDHEC support a short series of in-depth committee meetings focused entirely on the salt disposition topic to enable a better understanding of the topic and educate interested stakeholders.

Burning Paper Pellets in A Area Boilers

The Board recommended that SRS and DHEC work together to allow the use of the source testing data from the burning of paper pellets when evaluating the case-by-case limitation determination. It also asks DHEC to consider allowing the A Area boilers to be permitted under a modified permit based upon the case-by-case determination.

Recommendations to the Department of Energy on Transuranic ...

- We recommend that the DOE finish its analyses and make a decision with adequate public involvement regarding where to characterize TRU waste for disposal.

The following issues impede accelerated cleanup: (a) oversized boxes have no available containers or method of transport without size reduction and, (b) high-activity waste has no available container without requiring repackaging and increased risk to personnel.

THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE expedite design, certification, and fabrication of appropriate containers (e.g., ARROW-PAK and TRUPACT III), and accelerate the adoption of rail transport, as appropriate.

There is a continuing public concern about shipping radioactive TRU waste, which impacts states' approaches to permitting and inspection.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE revitalize its efforts in coordinating transportation issues with states and Indian Tribes and assist in updating and disseminating information to the public about transportation risks and safety and provide public participation opportunities on transportation issues.

675-T Before ...

And 675-T After!

SRS Levels Old Buildings

Savannah River Site is changing the proverbial skyline. And the first area being razed, as part of those changes by the Deactivation and Decommissioning Program is the TNX area. Nine buildings occupying 44,000 square feet have been demolished since work began late last year on the former research and development location. The site declared these buildings as no longer needed. This new focus is prompted by the DOE's desire to accelerate planning of cleanup and demolition activities at the site.

TNX was built near the banks of the Savannah River by the DuPont Co. for the Atomic Energy Commission, the predecessor to the DOE. The purpose of TNX was to conduct tests. As SRS equipment was brought in by barge on the river, it was inspected, tested and sent on to other site areas for installation.

The most recent building in the TNX area to come down is 675-T, a demonstration facility for melters that processed nuclear waste. The demolition work was completed on December 19, 2002. All work in TNX is scheduled to be complete by October 2004.

Another unrelated area on site that is seeing its skyline come down is M-area. Referenced as the "Six Pack", this project will raze six M area buildings, totaling more than 150,000 square feet, in less than 18 months. It is the largest decommissioning project ever undertaken at SRS. The project is being funded through site cost savings and productivity improvement initiatives.

The Six Pack project includes the following buildings: 340-M, 313-M, 320-M, 322-M, 330-M and 331-M. They are being removed through an approach that uses site forces, subcontractors, and the site's Assets for Services program, in which outside companies perform decommissioning services in exchange for site assets – at little or no cost to the government.

Building 340-M was decommissioned by site workers and is gone. The next building, 322-M, will be razed through a contract that soon will be awarded. The work is scheduled to begin in April 2003.

New members in the Spot

Donna Antonucci
Donna is a Biology Instructor at a private school in Savannah, Ga. She is known for her passionate interest in the environment and her determination to give a voice to those who are disadvantaged. She is a member of the American Society for Microbiologists, the Georgia Science Teachers Association, the Mercy Secondary Education Association and the National Catholic Education Society. Donna also coaches track.

Jennifer Barrington
Jennifer is a Special Project Manager for the Beaufort Jasper Water Authority responsible for a new water plant being constructed in South Carolina. She holds a Civil Engineering degree from Clemson University and a Masters in Public Administration from the University of South Carolina. She has regulatory experience in stormwater, solid waste, wastewater and drinking water. She is a member of the Water Environment Federation and American Water Works Association. She resides in Beaufort, S.C.

Leon Chavous
Leon performed thirty years of professional service at South Carolina State University in the Schools of Agriculture and Science. He was Director of the Extension & Research Program and has dedicated two-thirds of his career to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people. He is the Vice Chairman of the Deacon Board at Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church where he also initiated a SHARE food program. He resides in Orangeburg, S.C.

Mary Drye
Mary is a registered nurse working in a local high school in Augusta, Ga. She is also an assessor for long term care insurance, a volunteer for the Red Cross with disaster training and a member of the Center for Disease Control Health Effects Subcommittee. She has also worked as a chemical dependency nurse and is a former Chair/President of the Georgia Nurses Association in Augusta, Ga. Mary volunteers for the Shelter & Advocacy Center for Abused Children as well. She resides in Augusta, Ga.

Bill Lawless
Bill is a former DOE employee who now is employed as an associate professor of mathematics and social psychology at an historically black college in Augusta, Ga. Featured in the video documentary "Building Bombs," he holds a M.S. in mechanical engineering and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in social psychology. He served on the citizens working group which drafted the charter and developed the selection process for the SRS Citizens Advisory Board and served as Environmental Restoration & Waste Management Committee Chair during a six-year term with the Board that ended in 1999. He resides in Augusta, Ga.

Wendell Lyon
A retired medical services army officer, Wendell is a veteran with tour of duty in Vietnam. He holds a Bachelor of Science in medical technology from the University of Hawaii and a Masters of Science in microbiology from the University of Arizona. He has over 15 years experience as an owner of a small trucking firm and currently owns farming and timberland in Burke County. He is a member of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists and the American Society of Microbiologists. He resides in Waynesboro, Ga.

Darryl Nettles
Darryl is a chemist at the Savannah River Site and an adjunct instructor at Aiken Technical College. He holds a Bachelor of Science in chemistry. Darryl was a board member for the Pre-Alumni Council UNCF. He was president of the Christian Student Association at Stillman College where he was also a member of the Student Government Association. He serves as the Public Relations Chair for the Ministerial Alliance Fellowship at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church. Mr. Nettles recently moved from Jackson, S.C. to Augusta, Ga.

Harold Rahn
Harold is the Vice Chairman of the Planning/ Zoning Board in Springfield, Ga. He served two terms as a councilman and served as Chairman of the Fire Department Committee and as a member of the Police Committee and Water and Sewage Committees. His business experience includes truck and trailer leasing. He was a member of the Springfield Volunteer Fire Department for 27 years.

Recommendations to the Department of Energy on Transuranic (TRU) Waste Management By Environmental Management's Site Specific Advisory Boards

The cost of characterization of transuranic (TRU) waste is too high, particularly at small quantity sites. The cost of confirmation of TRU waste is too high, especially at large quantity sites.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the Department of Energy (DOE) characterize TRU waste as required to reduce risk and minimize transportation and handling of the waste, while making the confirmation process cost effective.

The receiving capacity of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) is not always sustained.

- THEREFORE, to meet site-specific needs, we recommend that the DOE allocate and coordinate resources complex-wide to optimize shipping to match the receiving capacity of WIPP.

Some requirements affecting the TRU waste management program are overly prescriptive, are hazardous to worker safety, do not contribute to public safety, and are also negatively impacting schedules and costs. These requirements were developed without the experience the National TRU Waste Management Program now possesses.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE, in concert with stakeholders and regulators, initiate an ongoing program to identify, correct, and revise those requirements that interfere with the safe, prompt and cost effective management of TRU waste.

There are potential TRU wastes for which volumes and disposition paths are not yet identified, including but not limited to: (a) pre-1970 TRU waste, (b) non-defense TRU waste, (c) sodium bearing waste, (d) Hanford tank waste, and (e) TRU waste without an identified disposal path. These TRU wastes may cumulatively exceed the authorized capacity of WIPP.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE identify volumes and disposition pathways for all potential TRU waste streams; and further,

- We recommend that DOE, in consultation with stakeholders and regulators, initiate action to assure that WIPP has the capacity to accommodate all of the above listed TRU wastes, as necessary.

There is TRU waste for which containers are not currently available or planned.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE accelerate TRU waste container design, licensing and deployment. At present, the regulatory framework requires one hundred percent confirmation of TRU waste process knowledge.

Wade Waters, Citizens Advisory Board Chair, points out disposed SRS Transuranic Waste At WIPP during tour of underground facilities.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE streamline TRU waste management by accepting demonstrated process knowledge for TRU waste characterization; and further,

- We recommend that the DOE, in consultation with stakeholders and regulators, reexamine the categorization of TRU waste using a risk-based approach; and further,

- We recommend that the DOE identify the inventory of orphan TRU waste and assign a corporate project team to develop a path forward.

Ninety-five percent of the TRU waste is at five sites, and the remaining five percent is at more than twenty sites. The small sites have limited capacity (i.e., time, personnel, and funding) to characterize and obtain WIPP certification for disposal. The ability to ship from small sites to major sites involves less rigorous characterization than WIPP acceptance criteria. Some major sites will have the personnel and facilities to characterize the waste to WIPP at less risk and for less money.

- THEREFORE, we recommend that the DOE evaluate the concept of one or more locations to characterize TRU waste for WIPP disposal; and further,